

# **Conversations with Conservation**

**The following is a selection of historical articles from our archives, and includes those whose headlines are featured in the display.**

**They consist of newspaper and magazine articles, as well as policy statements, petitions, and other publications relevant to the topic of wildlife conservation in the Canadian Rockies.**

# Who Are The Parks For Anyway?

With more and more people being attacked and mauled by bears, the authorities should give serious consideration to cleaning the animals out of areas where tourists and national park visitors congregate.

This "clean up" program might well include shooting any bears found in areas where tourists are permitted to go.

It may seem at first that this is a shocking and drastic solution to the problem, but surely a human life is worth more than a bear's.

And it is more likely that most of the animals, being reasonably intelligent, would move back into the remote areas when they saw their fellows being shot.

No doubt there are many incidents involving these animals where the people attacked have virtually invited disaster by foolishly feeding them or by teasing them.

But there have been many incidents, too, where individuals have been attacked without any provocation; by bears with cubs, for example. This is not to be tolerated. Visitors to parks are forbidden from carrying firearms and thus park officials have an obligation to protect these people, within reason of course. This protection should extend to shooting any bears found in

the area at once, not trapping them and taking them to remote areas two or three times before they are shot.

Who, after all, are the parks for? The bears? There are those who will say that destroying the bears will upset nature's balance. This is nonsense. In the first place, bears perform little useful function in nature's scheme of things and the majority of them would simply retreat to outlying areas once it became apparent they were to be treated no longer as pets.

There has grown up the myth that bears are cute; that they are friendly and quite tame. This is simply not true. Merely because some of them hang about garbage dumps and areas frequented by tourists looking for a hand-out does not mean they are harmless. They are wild animals and dangerous and should be treated as such.

Rangers and park officials should be given authority to shoot these animals on sight. Campers and park visitors should not have to face the unnecessary hazard of being attacked by a bear while enjoying an outing or holiday in our forests and mountain resorts.

Either that, or the parks should be closed to all visitors, thus giving these areas back completely to the bears.

# The Parks Are For The People

It is time the Banff National Park officials either shoot or trap and move to remote areas bears which menace park visitors.

Two incidents last weekend indicate the necessity for doing this. In one case a man was mauled by a bear and in a second an entire camp site was terrorized.

There is not much that can be done about the first because it happened outside the park. It does serve, however, to demonstrate clearly how dangerous these animals can be.

In this particular case, the man who was mauled was not molesting the animal in any way. The bear apparently thought her cubs were endangered and rushed the man and his friends.

This should drive home to those people who persist in feeding bears the foolishness of their acts. It should prove to them that the bears, however tame and friendly they appear, are in fact wild animals and should be treated as such.

The other incident occurred at a park campsite at the Eisenhower Junction. Here a bear chased campers about the site and it was apparently only good fortune that a camper wasn't mauled. In cases such as this, the park officials should act quickly and decisively. Bears which hang about camp sites should be shot or,

failing this, they should be trapped and taken to remote areas. There are those, of course, who will argue that the balance of nature will be destroyed if the animals are shot; that our parks are wildlife preserves and that the bears are a tourist attraction. But for whom, after all, are the parks set up and maintained? The bears?

Campers are forbidden to take firearms into the parks unless they obtain a special permit. It is thus up to the park officials to protect campers and other visitors to the parks if they are not permitted to protect themselves.

Visitors who feed the bears, and this is illegal, are asking for trouble and not much sympathy can be wasted on them when they are injured. But campers who have nothing to do with the animals and who exercise reasonable precautions with their food supplies and their garbage have a right to expect that they will be protected from the bears by park officials. Protected, that is, as much as is humanly possible.

The plain truth is that bears are dangerous, particularly those animals which forage about camps and thus lose to a certain extent their natural fear of man. Those animals known to hang about camps should be destroyed or moved before a tragedy occurs.

# Fish and game association 'on threshold of new conservation era'

By RICK ZEMANEK  
of The Advocate

Alberta Fish and Game Association is "on the threshold of a new era in conservation programs sponsored by Alberta's sportsmen," its annual conference was told here Thursday.

Outgoing president Don Hayden said the association will take its first step in that direction when it votes today or Saturday on a resolution calling for a "new level of conservation action."

The resolution asks the association to develop a fish and wildlife habitat enhancement program for

Alberta, "at the earliest possible date," to be funded by donations outside the group.

"The plan is to establish a habitat enhancement trust under suitable legislation available in provincial or federal statutes, and to retain professional habitat managers to carry out the program," the resolution proposes.

"The AF and GA now has the contacts and the advisors to raise money and to manage habitat on a scale which can produce significant benefits to Alberta," delegates were told.

On other matters in his annual report, Mr. Hayden said the group's "most outstanding achievement" in 1980 was credibility.

"Your association is well respected in industry, government and particularly by other organized groups," Mr. Hayden told the more than 350 persons attending the three-day conference at the Black Knight Inn.

He urged delegates to maintain close ties with the Western Stock Growers Association, Unifarm and the Alberta Cattle Commission.

Mr. Hayden said the association is still struggling with the provincial government to implement mandatory hunter training for all first-time Alberta hunters.

Few MLA's have indicated they support the program and it appears the premier also is not in favor, Mr. Hayden said.

"But not one government member has been able to give me an example of how they could be hurt by legislating that hunters be qualified before purchasing a licence."

*Fish and Game president claims:*

# Tightwad Alberta threatens wildlife

By RICK ZEMANEK  
of The Advocate

The provincial government is not spending enough money to ensure a healthy future for Alberta's fish and wildlife populations, the president of the Alberta Fish and Game Association said Thursday.

Don Hayden said the government is placing Alberta's natural heritage in jeopardy because of its penny-pinching attitude towards the public lands and wildlife department.

He said the government lists that department as "low priority" at budget time, skimping on funds badly needed for manpower and proper fish and wildlife management schemes.

"There is a propensity of cabinet ministers sitting on the finance committee... that seem to take delight in arbitrarily hacking fish and wildlife budgets," he told the association's annual conference at the Black Knight Inn.

Mr. Hayden said manpower shortages and "political meddling is having a direct impact on the morale of fish and wildlife division personnel."

He said if the situation isn't corrected soon, environmentally concerned citizens and sportsmen will have to take over part of the job of wildlife management and habitat preservation.

"I find it hard to accept the blue and orange philosophy of 'we (provincial government) do it all for you,'" Mr. Hayden told more than 350 delegates attending the opening of the three-day conference.

"Maybe they (the government) don't like Albertans enjoying their natural heritage the way we want to. They prefer to tell us what to enjoy and where to do it."

Chris van der Merwe, association vice-president-at-large, concurred with the presidents remarks in his annual report.

"It's high time the Minister (of public lands and wildlife) secured a budget allotment for fish and wildlife so that they can do the work they are supposed to be doing.

"Or is it the provincial government considers our wildlife and its habitat of no value to Albertans?"

Mr. van der Merwe said his "sympathies are with the biologists and field personnel who are trying to do the best they can with limited personnel and budgets."

Mr. Hayden said Alberta's fish and wildlife populations are "in trouble" if the provincial government doesn't start allotting substantially more funds.

For more on fish and game meeting see Page 1B.

# Compensation sought for destroyed habitat

By RICK ZEMANEK  
of The Advocate

Alberta Fish and Game Association wants industry and developers to pay for fish and wildlife habitat they destroy.

In a resolution passed at its annual convention here Friday, the association says "mitigation for such losses should be a requirement for replacement in kind or by dollar."

The 250 delegates voting were told "there are proven methods that can effectively moderate habitat losses by replacement."

"In the interest of wildlife and future development, we must provide for developers to contribute to enhancement programs that will help to compensate for those losses."

On another habitat issue, the association's renewable resources committee passed a resolution asking the government to re-evaluate the number of cattle allowed in "critical wildlife areas" on the Eastern Slopes.

Meanwhile, the AF and GA wants the government to keep a closer eye on big game hunters by increasing the use of road blocks for checking hunters, according to a resolution passed by its hunting committee.

That committee also passed a resolution urging the government to legalize big game hunting with a crossbow in Alberta.

And in a third resolution, it asks the government to institute a research program on the wolf population and take steps, if necessary, to control the animal.

"Hunters harvest the game population and equal pressure should be applied to the predators," the resolution states.

The fishing committee, meanwhile, wants more than just a fine imposed against fisherman caught breaking the angling laws.

*See related story page 2B.*

## Fish and game annual meeting

# Habitat program grows

By RICK ZEMANEK  
of The Advocate

Alberta Fish and Game Association entered a new era in conservation programs Friday, voting to tackle a unique fish and wildlife habitat enhancement program.

Under the proposal going to the government, the association wants to develop a program for the benefit of the entire province with funds coming from outside the association.

Outgoing president Don Hayden termed the project "a new level of conservation action."

The plan is to establish a habitat enhancement trust under legislation available in provincial or federal statutes and to retain professional habitat managers to carry out the program.

"The AF and GA now has the contacts and advisors to raise money and to manage habitat on a scale which can produce significant benefits to Alberta," says a resolution 250 delegates unanimously passed.

Delegates were told there has been a startling increase in hunters and fish-

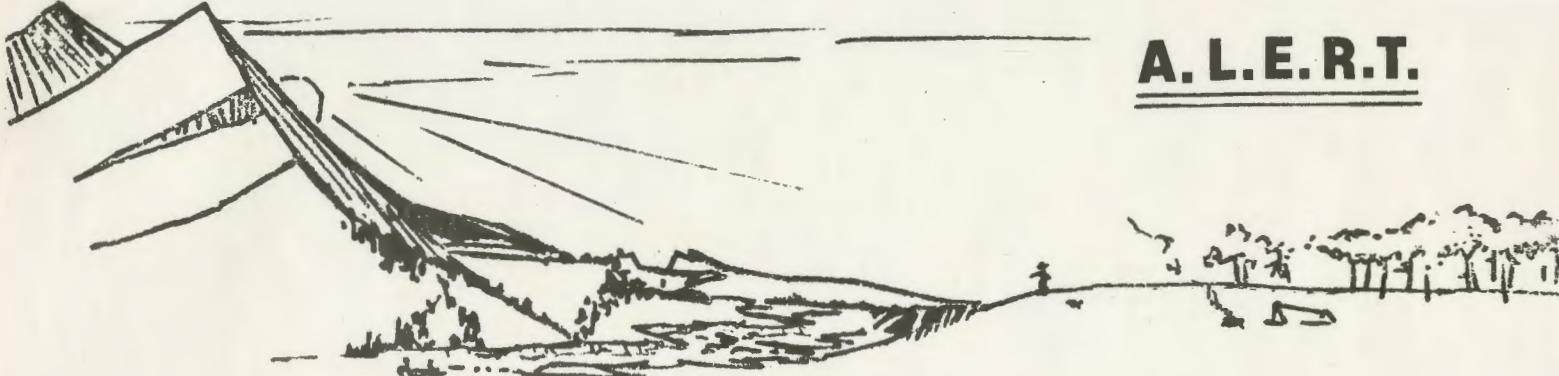
erman in Alberta and because of competition among themselves, hunting and fishing opportunities have declined significantly.

"A review of fish and wildlife management activities in Alberta indicates two areas where improvements can best be made: rebuilding Prairie game bird habitat and enhancement of stream fish habitat."

Delegates were told that despite the decline in game bird habitat, "we can have it back again, but it will cost money and will have to be managed."

They also heard Alberta may have a large number of streams with suitable fish habitat, "but even the best streams have very short seasons for production of fish food and produce fishing opportunities that have difficulty standing up to heavy pressure." Other streams are damaged by competing land use.

"In a good number of cases, these streams can be improved by stream habitat enhancement projects," says the resolution.



**A.L.E.R.T.**

# **Alberta League for Environmentally Responsible Tourism**

ALERT was formed in March 1979 in response to the Government's decision to grant a conditional lease for the construction of the Odyssey, a conference center-resort complex proposed for development on the David Thompson Highway where it meets the Cline River. This location is near the Kootenay Plains which is a sensitive and unique area and which may not be able to endure a major facility so nearby. ALERT has since become concerned with general planning and misuse of the area.

ALERT is a nonprofit organization and has applied for incorporation under the Societies Act.

ALERT believes in the wise and responsible use of Alberta's crown land.

ALERT believes that all forms of outdoor recreationists have a right to use crown land as long as they do not damage it. Outdoor recreation is a major industry in Alberta and will continue to grow in importance as the nonrenewable resources are depleted. The quality of life in Alberta also depends upon the availability of outdoor recreation.

ALERT believes that facilities should be suitable for the areas that they are located in. Intensive use and service facilities should be located near areas that are already developed.

ALERT believes that outdoor recreation and tourist developments should not damage the environment so that future generations can enjoy the outdoors.

ALERT needs people to show their support and ALERT needs money to continue the fight for environmentally responsible tourism. If you would like to become a member or if you would like to make a contribution please return the bottom of this page along with your cheque to ALERT, Box 1288, Rocky Mtn. House, Alberta TOM 1T0.

please print

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

PHONE NO. \_\_\_\_\_

I wish to:

1. become a member  
enclosed is \$5.00.
2. make a contribution  
enclosed is \_\_\_\_\_.

(income tax receipt will be sent)

# Wildlife Sorely Needing Public Relations Service

OTTAWA (CP) — Canadian birds, animals and fish need a good public relations office, a noted wildlife expert said Tuesday.

Dr. Harrison F. Lewis, retiring with a continent-wide reputation as chief of Canada's Wildlife Service, said in an interview that he considers public relations services in connection with organized wildlife management are "very inadequate".

A FREE AGENT since his retirement became effective Monday, he made it clear that he was not trying to embarrass the service he is leaving.

"The department knows my views," he said.

However, he stressed that wildlife public relations should be handled by a staff specially-designed for such work, made up of "people who know how to write and who have the knowledge of wildlife conservation problems".

While he believed this should be done by the government, it could also be done by private

agencies. In both respects, Canada lagged far behind the United States, where most of the states had their own public relations groups and where private agencies handled conservation publicity on a scale undreamed of in Canada.

SPORTS MAGAZINES and some newspaper columnists were doing "excellent work" in this field, he added, but nothing comparable to what was being done in the United States.

The mild-mannered, 58-year-old veteran of 31 years' government conservation service intends, in his own small way, to practice what he preaches. Leaving the civil service seven years before his time — the normal retirement age is

65—he is retiring to devote his time to "writing, lecturing and research work, and enjoying wildlife in rural surroundings."

HE AND Mrs. Lewis, who is described as a wildlife lover by marriage, have bought a 70-acre tract by the sea at West Middle Sable, in Shelburne County, N.S., near the scene of his boyhood. They'll set up housekeeping there next month.

Born in Sag Harbor, Long Island, of Nova Scotian ancestry, he first became interested in birds when his grandfather bought him a three-year subscription to a periodical called "Birds". He was three then, and has been fascinated with birds ever since.

# Bears, Humans Problem

By BOB SHIELS

[Herald Banff Bureau]

BANFF — A continuing campaign against bears who tend to molest humans and humans who persist in getting chummy with bears is being waged by the mountain parks warden service.

Stated policy of the warden service is to protect lives and property while keeping it in mind that the parks are designed as the natural habitat for wildlife.

Casualties to date this year: 12 bears destroyed because they had become either a nuisance or a menace, four humans fined for illegally handing out food.

The records show more than 70 bears that had been hanging around highways were eliminated in the national parks last year, and that charges laid for illegally feeding them numbered nine.

## PROGRESS MADE

While quite a few reports have come in this year about bears molesting campers and hikers, wardens believe progress in providing protection is being made.

Outside the developed areas of the parks, serious run-ins with bears have become comparatively infrequent.

Long service in Banff, Jasper, Yoho and Kootenay National Parks has enabled wardens to distinguish different bears as individuals.

Thus one warden recently was able to report authoritatively that the bear which a Calgary woman was fined for feeding was a well-known "scrounger."

The warden service makes an attempt to educate bears and humans in the rules and regulations they have to observe within the park boundaries.

A bear that becomes obstreperous is trapped in a barrel and driven to some remote area. After some intrepid warden has slapped a smear of paint on his back to identify him, he is freed.

If he finds his way back to civilization, he gets the treatment all over again.

If he comes back another time, that usually is the end of it. He is a three-time loser and can expect to be shot.

## EVERY EFFORT MADE

As far as humans are concerned, every effort is made to make it clear that feeding bears is not a safe practice. Pamphlets to this effect are distributed at the park gates and information centres.

Where education fails, park wardens have instructions to waste no time in enforcing the game regulations — whereupon the matter goes before Judge E. O. Taylor in Banff police court.

When the tourist strays from the beaten path, there can be no guarantee that anyone will be able to provide him with protection.

The hinterland is mostly wilderness country where, parks officials say, the explorer is pretty well on his own. He should have some knowledge of how to look after himself and stay out of trouble.

The parks department in these cases can do little more than give advice and try to keep travellers out of potential danger areas.

A continuing problem that has not yet been solved is that of garbage dumps.

Bears are not at all fussy about what they have for lunch, or where they get it. Garbage deposited at camp sites or picnic grounds (even within the well-poulated town sites) attracts them.

In 1958 arrangements were made to collect garbage from these places twice as frequently as in the past.

No garbage container has been designed yet that is guaranteed to keep a bear from getting into it, but new types of containers are being tested.

# 20 'Friendly' Bears Shot So Far in 1960

BANFF, Alta. (CP) — Twenty too-friendly bears have been shot so far this year in Canada's national parks. Last year there were 75 double-offenders killed by national parks employees.

The bears, painted red on both haunches and banished to the hinterland of the parks when they become over friendly with the tourists, are given two chances before they are done away with.

After their first offence the bears are captured, daubed on one side of its back side, and taken in a barrel to a far corner of the park. The second time the other side is smeared and exile is pronounced. The third time — finish.

The theory is that tourists seeing the red-smeared bears take warning and keep well clear.

The subject arose last week in

the House of Commons when Minister of Northern Affairs and National Resources Alvin Hamilton suggested tourists beware of the painted bears.

Eldon Wooliams (PC — Bow River) suggested tourists be allowed to carry firearms, but failed to find support from the minister.

Tourists are warned each time they enter one of the parks by pamphlets and folders telling them to stay away from the animals and under no circumstances feed them — but some always do.

EDMONTON (CP) — Wanted immediately — bear painters in Canada's national parks.

This ad appeared Monday in the male help wanted section of the Edmonton Journal. There was no answer at the two phone numbers listed.

In *The Albertan*, Hubert U. Green fonds (m243/2/1/3)

## PAINT-DAUBED BEARS ARE MARKED FOR 'LIFE'

[Herald Banff Bureau]

National park bears which sport two daubs of red paint on their rear ends are, in more ways than one, marked for life.

The two marks are there, not to warn tourists away, but to inform park wardens that the bear is a two-time offender. That is, the bear with two red marks has twice wandered close to civilized areas of the park and is to be shot when he appears for the third time.

So far this year parks authorities have destroyed about 20 of the three-time losers. In 1959 a total of 75 were destroyed.

Here is how the paint-daubing system will work:

A bear which wanders close to the inhabited areas of the parks will be trapped by wardens, transported to a remote area, daubed once on the posterior, and released.

If the bear returns to civilization again, the same performance will be repeated with a second red daub being applied.

On the third occasion, however, there will be no trapping.

How are the tourists to know the dangerous bears without sneaking up behind them? They won't, but they can take the advice of the parks authorities and stay away from all bears.

In *Calgary Herald* - July 26, 1960,  
Hubert U. Green fonds (m241/2/1/8)

## BAD BEARS BEADAUBED WITH RED ON REAR-END

By CHRISTOPHER YOUNG

[The Herald's Ottawa Bureau, Copyright Southam Company Ltd.]

OTTAWA — If you're planning a holiday in Alberta's national parks, watch out for bears with red haunches.

Resources Minister Alvin Hamilton Friday refused to allow tourists to carry firearms as protection against marauding bears. Instead, he said dangerous bears had been painted red in the hind quarters as a warning to the unwary.

Eldon Wooliams (PC-Bow River) asked Mr. Hamilton in the Commons whether he would consider changing the firearm regulations so that tourists might protect themselves against unfriendly bears.

Mr. Hamilton admitted that a rising number of letters were arriving in Ottawa complaining about the danger from bears. But he said that under the National Parks Act it was his responsibility to protect the bears, not the people.

But the real culprit, said Mr. Hamilton, is not the bear but the tourist who feeds the bear or strews his garbage about the parks.

In *Calgary Herald* - July 23, 1960,  
Hubert U. Green fonds (m243/2/1/2)

## 'Friendly' Bears Are Painted Red

OTTAWA (CP) — Warning to visitors in the mountain national parks of Alberta and British Columbia: Beware of bears with red backsides.

This is the danger sign adopted by the parks branch of the national resources department to warn the public against bears that have become "overly friendly" with visitors.

Under regulations put into effect in 1958, and outlined in the Commons Friday by Resources Minister Alvin Hamilton, such bears are removed to "very distant spots" and have their posteriors painted red.

If they reappear in parts of the park frequented by the public, they are removed permanently, Mr. Hamilton said.

### AGAINST FIRE-ARMS

He rejected a suggestion by Eldon Wooliams (PC — Bow River) that "reliable people" be permitted to carry fire-arms in the parks to protect themselves.

Mr. Wooliams cited the attack Monday by a grizzly bear on five persons in Glacier National Park, in Montana just across the

border from Alberta. One of the five, a 10 - year - old boy, was critically injured.

Mr. Hamilton said that under the National Parks Act his responsibility is to protect the bears. However, it was his department's policy to warn people about the danger of feeding the animals.

The regulations outlined by Mr. Hamilton were introduced following a fatal attack on a little girl in Jasper National Park in 1958.

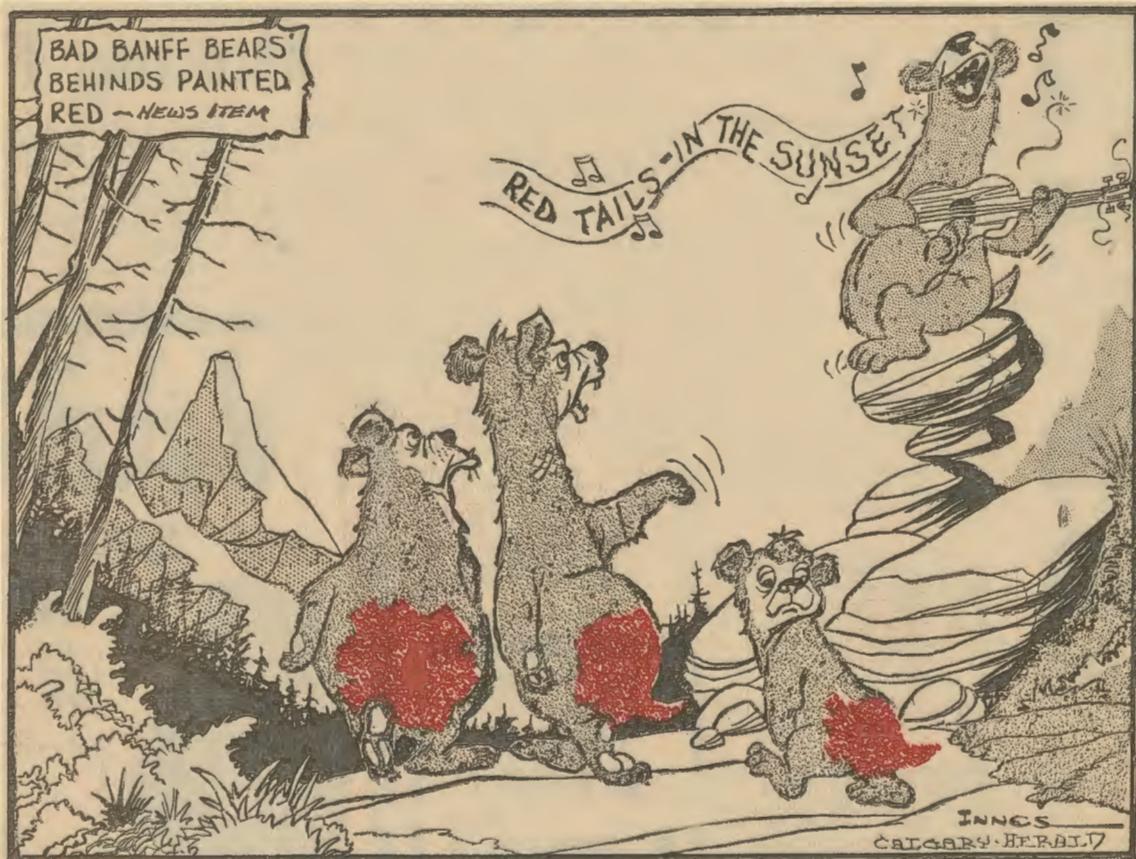
The minister said the greatest culprits were people who feed bears, or fail to dispose of garbage properly, thus encouraging bears to come around human habitations.

In *Calgary Albertan* - July 23, 1960,  
Hubert U. Green fonds (m243/2/1/4)



"Now remember folks, DON T FEED THE BEARS . . .

In *Calgary Herald*, Hubert U. Green fonds (m243/2/1/15)



"WISE GUY!"

In *Calgary Herald*, Hubert U. Green fonds (m243/2/1/16)

September 21, 1979

Mr. P. A. Lange  
Superintendent  
Banff National Park  
Box 900  
Banff, Alberta  
TOL 0C0

Dear Mr. Lange:

We, the undersigned, are concerned about the safety of residents, visitors and wildlife in the Park. We would like to express our support to the Warden Service and Park Administration of Banff National Park for finally taking action to control the garbage problem which has existed at the Chateau Lake Louise. We are grateful for this attempt to reduce the conflicts between wildlife and people in the Lake Louise area.

Sincerely,

cc John Fraser, M.P.  
Gordon Taylor, M.P.  
Wm. Turnbull, Director, Western Region, Parks Canada  
A. Anderson, Chief Park Warden, Banff National Park  
Crag and Canyon Newspaper  
Calgary Herald Newspaper

## Chateau charged because of garbage

The Chateau Lake Louise has been charged with three counts of negligent garbage handling, including feeding and enticing bears. Hotel representatives appeared in Banff Provincial Court on Monday, September 17. The charges were laid under the National Parks Act.

The National and Provincial Parks Association has applauded the move. In a press release released on Monday, the organization claims that grizzly bears were drawn to the hotel this summer by the availability of garbage. The association points out that this poses a danger to the public and submits figures showing that four people have been killed by bears in Glacier and Yellowstone Parks in the United States since 1967. The press release also notes several unfortunate encounters with bears in the Lake Louise area in which hikers were mauled and a Canadian Wildlife Service employee was killed.

The association doubts the effectiveness of the current Parks Canada removal program. Removing bears to isolated areas doesn't always work and it is necessary at times to kill the animals. The association feels that this would not be necessary were regulations regarding the storage of garbage more strictly enforced.

It points out that a strict program of this sort has been in force in Yellowstone Park since the early 1970s. In the past two years that park has found it necessary to relocate only one bear and only one has been shot. Yellowstone's bear population is double that of Banff.

The situation in Lake Louise contrasts strongly with Yellowstone. During 1972-73, for example, garbage-habituated grizzly bears were removed from the Lake Louise area a total of 56 times. At least 9 grizzly bears were killed.

NAME

ADDRESS

\* There are several copies of this letter in circulation.

## NATIONAL PARK OR INTERNATIONAL PLAYGROUND?

As residents of Canada with a strong interest in preserving our National Parks for ourselves, our children and future generations, we would like to voice our objections to the proposed \$30 million development at Lake Louise in Banff National Park.

Such intensive development is neither necessary nor desirable when Banff, only 37 miles away, provides similar facilities for around 17,000 visitors. As precedent such development would provide easy argument for further commercial development and exploitation of Canada's National Parks.

Economists project that for Lake Louise (figures from the proposed developer) there will be 1,000,000 skier days by 1990. Since there will be a maximum of 700 parking spaces for day skiers, it seems certain that Lake Louise will be no ski area for the casual recreational skier.

We recognize that the ski facilities at Lake Louise provide healthful outdoor recreation, but suggest that ski resorts of the magnitude proposed for the Lake Louise area must be located outside our National Parks.

Proposed for Village Lake Louise, in addition to accommodations, are boutiques, discotheques, gourmet restaurants, a health spa, specialty clothing stores and other such amenities found in our towns and cities. These surely are not the natural features and beauty which attract us to our national parks.

We feel most strongly that this development will become an attraction in its own right, contrary to all reasons for establishing national parks.

Thus, in the strongest possible terms, we urge the Government of Canada to abandon this development and instead design a true Visitor Services Centre whose purpose will be to help the park visitor understand and enjoy the spectacular natural environment of the Lake Louise area.

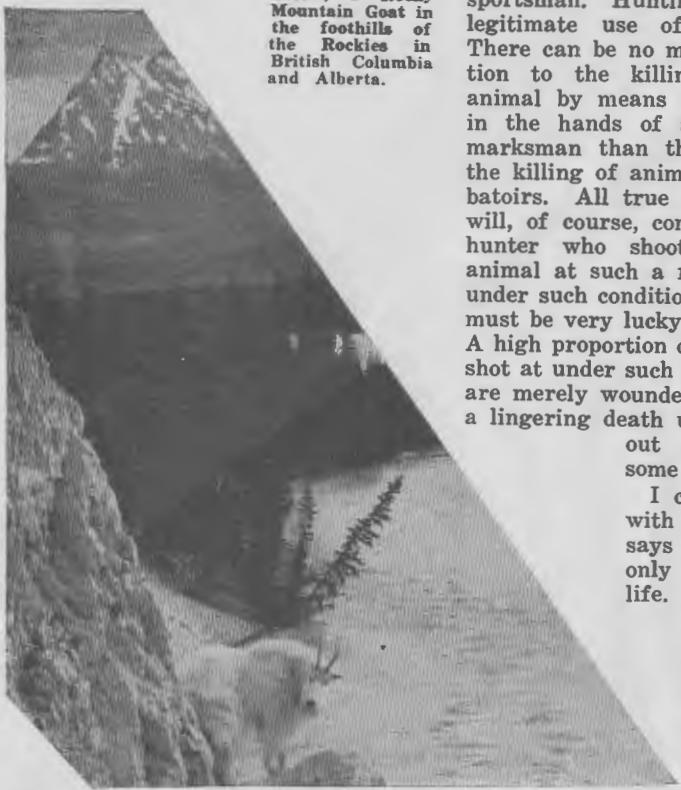
NAME

## ADDRESS

(In addition to signing this petition, you are also urged to submit a brief to the National and Historic Parks Branch in Ottawa opposing this development. A letter that is designated as a brief is very adequate, and massive public support for this cause is vital.)

Return this petition to: Calgary-Banff Chapter, National and Provincial Parks Association, Box 608, Sub P.O. 91, Calgary 44, Alberta, by March 5th. 24th

Below, a Rocky Mountain Goat in the foothills of the Rockies in British Columbia and Alberta.



sportsman. Hunting is a legitimate use of wildlife. There can be no more objection to the killing of an animal by means of a rifle in the hands of an expert marksman than there is to the killing of animals in abattoirs. All true sportsmen will, of course, condemn the hunter who shoots at an animal at such a range and under such conditions that he must be very lucky to kill it. A high proportion of animals shot at under such conditions are merely wounded and die a lingering death unless put

out of their misery by some carnivore.

I cannot go all the way with Mr. Fisher when he says that sportsmen are the only true friends of wildlife. It is true, of course, that sportsmen have been responsible for much of the protective legislation that has been passed in the interests of



Above, the lordly moose, behind a wire enclosure in an Alberta National Park.

population increase is kept in check by natural means it must be controlled by artificial ones.

The disastrous effects of permitting animals to multiply without either natural or artificial checks have been too often demonstrated to leave any doubt as to what happens. A classic example is that of deer in the Kaibab Forest. In the eighteen years following the creation of the preserve, 674 cougars and 3,000 coyotes were killed in the area. With the removal of these animals, the deer increased so much that in 1924, it

In the October 1942 issue of *HUNTING and FISHING in CANADA*, W. C. Fisher, Chairman of the Big Game Section of the Alberta Fish and Game Association, contributed an article entitled "Sabotage in the National Parks". Mr. Fisher has devoted a good deal of study to the game situation in Alberta and his opinions deserve serious consideration.

For instance, when he says that the boundaries of these parks have been fixed without regard to game, the migration of game or the suitability of certain areas for the purpose for which they were set aside, his criticism may be well founded. Wildlife sanctuaries should contain sufficient of the various types of habitat necessary to the species they are intended to protect. To meet Mr. Fisher's criticism, it would be well to have the park areas and their immediate surroundings surveyed by animal ecologists and the boundaries adjusted so as to provide the required extent of conditions necessary to the welfare of the various types of animals to be afforded sanctuary.

I am also in sympathy with Mr. Fisher's plea for more game for the

Below, the American Bison or Buffalo, now practically extinct.



## Game in the National Parks

wildlife, especially game. But there are many sincere friends of wildlife who are not hunters. I do not regard the over-sentimentalist who is opposed to all killing as necessarily a friend to wildlife. All of the animals born into this world cannot possibly find a living. If all survived, a few generations would suffice so to crowd their habitat that they would die either of starvation or of disease.

Where I find myself in disagreement with Mr. Fisher is in his belief that our National Parks should be devoted to the production of game and that game should be hunted in the parks. He does not state these objects quite so bluntly but I can see no alternative interpretation of some of his statements. For instance, he says, "National Parks, it is true, were made for the people, yes all the people, not merely a few camera hunters and a few tourists, but sportsmen also have the right to benefit from the game as well as anybody else." His reference to the killing of animals by predators as "wasting animal life" clearly implies that man should kill and use the animals in National Parks instead of allowing predators to kill them.

Mr. Fisher is quite logical in asking that man should kill game animals in parks if predators are to be eliminated because, as I have said, if all the animals born were allowed to survive the habitat would soon be overcrowded. Game will not practise birth control and unless

was estimated by a committee appointed to study the situation that there were considerably more than 25,000 or 30,000 deer in the area. G. T. Pearson, a member of the committee wrote:

"The forage situation was appalling. The snowberry, the service-berry and the dwarf ceanothus had been vastly over-utilized. The twigs on the lower limbs of the locust and the aspen were eaten away as high as a buck could reach on his hind legs. The cliff rose was dead over large areas because of the excessive use. There was no young growth of any kind, as sprouts were bitten off by the deer almost as soon as they came above the ground. The smaller scrub oaks had been ridden down and all foliage including the terminal buds had been removed.

"A few of the deer were killed for examination. They were pitifully poor and in their stomachs were needles of the fir which deer ordinarily do not eat in quantity unless driven to do so by threatened starvation. We counted more than one hundred deer a day as we rode through the forest. The outlines of their ribs were clearly discernible and this at a time of the year when the animals should have been fat and robust. Many of the does with fawns in a most deplorable condition, and many young had died."

by Prof. J. R. Dymond

Director of the Royal Ontario Museum of Zoology.

# An Answer to the Criticism of the National Parks Department by W. C. Fisher in His October Article "Sabotage in the National Parks"

Alberta has already had one illustration of what is likely to happen in a park managed along artificial lines. The buffalo at Wainwright were protected from their natural enemies. The overpopulation which resulted was somewhat reduced by artificial killing and an effort made to relieve the effect of numbers too large for the range by artificial feeding. Result: Buffalo Park is no more; the entire herd had to be slaughtered and the area to be allowed to lie fallow until nature restores it to its natural condition.

I have every reason to believe that in thinning out the buffalo population, the small, weak, diseased and otherwise undesirable animals were removed and an effort made to permit the larger, healthier and more vigorous animals to reproduce. Is that the practice likely to be followed by sportsmen permitted to hunt in a National Park? If the average hunter has any choice in the matter of the type of animal he kills, he chooses the largest and finest. Hunting literature is full of accounts of sportsmen stalking specially fine animals for days and killing them with pride at the end. The effect of such practices is ultimately to reduce the size and vigour of the stock. This result may not be apparent in a generation but it is inevitable ultimately. Aldo Leopold, author of "Game Manage-



Above, the Rocky Mountain Sheep of Alberta and British Columbia.

ment", in an article on Deer in Germany, says, "Most German foresters admit a gradual deterioration in antler size and quality. That this is partly due to culling prime males and can be reversed by culling defectives and by a more natural sex ratio has already been explained to Americans by Shepard". Sportsmen who kill only the best males are not friends of the species in the long run.

Are we to abandon our policy of maintaining National Parks as wildlife sanctuaries where nature is allowed to carry

on in her own way and turn them into game farms or are we to continue to regard them in the same way as the United States, South Africa and a steadily increasing number of other countries where National Parks are regarded as places where samples of the natural life of these different countries are preserved not only for the enjoyment of this generation but as legacies to the future? Are we so poor in land that we cannot afford to preserve samples which total less than one percent of our area under entirely natural conditions? Mr. Fisher implies that this idea is out of date. He says, "The world is changing and changing fast. Are those who are in charge of our wildlife keeping up with the times?"

At left, the swift, elusive Pronghorn Antelope of the western plains, now few in numbers.

It is well known that in United States National Parks and in the famous Kruger National Park, in South Africa, no hunting is permitted. A statement of the United States National Parks Service says, "As there is no hunting permitted in National Parks or monuments, the Service is not engaged in game management. No distinction is made between carnivorous or predatory animals and so-called 'game' animals in the administration of the wildlife resources by the National Parks Service. All species of wildlife are protected and are allowed to live their normal lives insofar as is possible commensurate with human use of the parks."

As recently as May 1st, 1942 an Inter-American Convention on Nature Protection and Wildlife Preservation went into effect after being signed by seven countries (U.S.A., Guatemala, Venezuela, El Salvador, Haiti, Peru and Dominican Republic). National Parks of the American type are included among the reserves to be created under this Convention. A similar Convention for the Protection of African fauna and flora was signed in 1933 by the Union of South Africa, Belgium, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Egypt, Spain, France, Italy, Portugal and the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan. This convention also made provision for National Parks of the type of the Kruger National Park of South Africa where lions are given the same protection as zebras and antelopes. At the present time in Great Britain consideration is being given to plans for the preservation of four types of areas including National Parks of the recognized type.

The principle of creating and maintaining National Parks for the preservation of natural life, plant and animal, in representative areas of the different regions of the earth is steadily spreading to all parts of the world.



# Learning to live with Old Grizz

BY PAUL GRESCOE

IS detente possible between grizzly bears and people? Two Canadian grizzly scholars learned early in their careers that this is not an academic question.

One August afternoon in 1962, Dick Russell, a 22-year-old zoology student, was helping his father make a film about grizzly bears in Alaska's Mount McKinley National Park. Hiking alone above the Toklat River, he crested a hill and saw a massive male grizzly no more than 30 feet away. The young

man's only "weapon" was a sheep skull he had found earlier. With a sudden slavering noise, the bear charged. Russell yelled and raised the sheep skull like a club. The grizzly stopped a few feet away and then, pawing the ground and slapping divots of dirt against his belly, he slowly retreated.

That wasn't Russell's first run-in with a grizzly. As a boy on his father's ranch near Waterton Lakes National Park in Alberta, he regularly encountered the big bears. It seemed only fitting that he became a biologist for the Canadian Wildlife Service and undertook a pio-

neering study of grizzly behavior in Alberta's Rocky Mountains.

Unlike Russell, researcher Steve Herrero, a biology and environmental science professor at the University of Calgary, had no early personal encounters with grizzlies. But he was deeply affected by the tragic story of two 19-year-old American girls who were killed by grizzlies in Montana's Glacier National Park on the same August night in 1967. One victim, Julie Helgeson, was in her sleeping bag in a camp-ground near a mountain chalet where grizzlies routinely dined on garbage. A



Don Halloran

## New studies of grizzly habits may save lives

Whether it's an old bear resting on the trail (right), or a female defending her cub (above), grizzlies can be dangerous. But Canadian biologists Dick Russell and Steve Herrero have learned some ways to avoid them.



Tom Capp Photography





Eric R. Langshaw

## **Garbage dumps: a major problem**

Bears lured by a smorgasbord of camp refuse are the ones most likely to attack. Yet despite biologists' warnings, some parks still use dumps.

female bear entered the campground and attacked the girl, mutilated her and then dragged her into the underbrush. She survived the night only to die on an improvised operating table. The other victim, Michele Koons, died almost instantly when an old rogue she-grizzly attacked while she and four friends were sleeping in a backcountry campground.

In Alberta, Steve Herrero heard a variety of outlandish explanations for the Glacier attacks: lightning had excited the bears, tourists had fed them LSD, hot weather had made them irritable. He was particularly upset by the suggestion of an American biologist, who was in the park at the time, that all grizzlies should be eliminated from Glacier and Yellowstone National Parks. Herrero subsequently analyzed grizzly victims' injuries in these and other attacks, visited the dozen western North American parks inhabited by grizzlies and eventually began a seminal study of the bear in Banff, a national park in the Alberta Rockies.

Herrero is in the fourth year of his five-year project in Banff; Dick Russell has just published the results of his

four-year project in Jasper National Park. On the basis of their work, both biologists are convinced that it is possible for people and bears to live in a state of more or less peaceful coexistence. Even within the relatively congested confines of national parks, they believe, it is not necessary to make an either-or choice. Together with other researchers in Canada and the U.S., Russell and Herrero have chronicled the life-style of the grizzly in such rich detail that park wardens now can find ways to accommodate a lot of people and a few grizzlies. "We can zone our parks to virtually eliminate conflicts," says Russell.

Intelligent decisions about managing the elusive bears are still difficult, however, when no one can even say how many there are. In Yellowstone, for example, population estimates range from as few as 82 to as many as 350. The consensus is that there are fewer than 1,000 left in the lower 48 states — which is why grizzlies have been classified as a "threatened" species by the U.S. government. In Alaska and Canada, there may be more than 35,000, but two-thirds of them roam

## **Grizzlies need room to roam**

Keeping people and bears apart in grizzly country is sound planning: when bears are in high meadows, hiking trails can be diverted to lowlands.



Marty Stouffer Productions





Eric R. Langshaw

Don Halloran

## How scientists are coping with grizzlies

To get close to these behemoths, researchers sedate them with special darts. Keeping track of individual bears involves radio transmitters, ear tags and paw-pad tattoos. Helicopters haul "problem" bears to more remote areas.

Don Halloran



Don Halloran

the far north. Steve Herrero and other biologists believe some of the small grizzly populations in southern Canada are as threatened as those in the U.S., but last year the Canadian government's endangered species committee decided that the grizzlies are not imperiled and therefore can be hunted.

In recent years, questions about the animal's status, as well as the matter of human safety in grizzly country, have occupied researchers on both sides of the border. One of the most ambitious studies is the ten-year Border Grizzly Project run by Charles Jonkel, a University of Montana biologist. This wide-ranging ecological study in the U.S. and Canada will not be completed until 1984. Other researchers have concentrated more specifically on bear-man confrontations. One of these, Cliff Martinka from Glacier National Park in Montana, says some park grizzlies lose their fear of people and become dangerous "mugger bears" that attack hikers to get their food. Frank and John Craighead are biologist brothers whose studies of grizzlies in Yellowstone call attention to "man-conditioned" bears that, "if startled or provoked by a human at close range," may attack. Such bears are often deliberately fed by well-intentioned people.

Steve Herrero's two statistical studies of grizzly attacks in national parks show that an injury rate of one person every three years rose dramatically during the 1960s to about five every year. Between 1970 and 1973, grizzlies attacked 23 people, killing two of them. There were almost as many attacks during those four years as there were between 1872 and 1960. What happened? Analyzing his data, Herrero has drawn some conclusions about the conditions under which attacks are most likely to occur:

- Grizzlies most often involved in backcountry attacks are mothers with cubs. In the early 1970s, they inflicted injuries in nearly three-quarters of the incidents that took place within the parks' more remote areas. And most often, they've been surprised at close range by hikers or horse riders.

- Females with cubs are probably the most aggressive of all grizzlies, but some young bears, especially young males, also can be dangerous. Small males that have been forced out of prime feeding areas by bigger males may wander into campgrounds or even

charge hikers in order to get food.

- Grizzlies can live for more than 20 years and aging individuals with worn teeth sometimes become dangerous rogues, rifling campgrounds and cabins for easy meals. On June 25, 1972, an almost toothless old female killed a young man in Yellowstone. The bear apparently was attracted to the victim's camp by garbage.

The main reason why attacks have been increasing has less to do with bears than with people. In recent years, public use of national parks in Canada and the U.S. has exploded. As a result, people-bear confrontations have mushroomed and the bears have suffered many more provocations. What is surprising, in fact, is not that bear attacks have increased, but that there have not been more of them. Given the amount of people pressure

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## The big bears add "character" to parks

**Shocked by one proposal to eliminate grizzlies from parks, biologists Herrero and Russell argue that campers are safer in parks than in cars, adding that the bears are "essential" to wilderness.**

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these days, actual bear attacks have been relatively rare.

The first recorded victim of a grizzly bear in a North American national park was a man who scared a grizzly cub up a tree in Yellowstone about 1900 — not the last foolhardy tourist to attempt such a stunt. The protective mother tore out the man's breastbone and a lung; he died five days later. Over the next 70 years, grizzlies killed only 5 and injured 25 people in the parks. Glacier, for instance, had no such deaths until the two girls were killed in 1967, and in all of Canada only one killing was even suspected: In 1929, the body of a Jasper park warden was found beside his cabin. A female grizzly was nearby with her cubs.

Today, motorists feed "cute" little black bear cubs by the roadside, campers stuff tents with enticing food, hikers wander the backcountry with abandon

and some park officials have been slow to make their "sanitary landfills" bear-proof. "Grizzlies," Herrero explains, "seem to learn to associate people with food or garbage." His research underscores the need for better handling of campground refuse. The two Glacier bears that killed those young women in 1967 each had a history of feeding on garbage. Two-thirds of all grizzly attacks once took place in campsites where garbage was ubiquitous, but in the early 1970s, after better handling of garbage and food was instituted in some national parks, such attacks dropped by nearly half. There's still room for improvement. Sloppy handling of edible material figured in five of the seven attacks that took place in campgrounds between 1970 and 1973.

There's more to Herrero's research than dissecting statistics. He has studied 30 grizzlies that pass through 100 square miles of the Cascade Valley in Banff. He's gathering hard information on the bears' use of the park, especially female bears, both with and without cubs. These facts help wardens route trails and place campgrounds in the safest parts of the park.

Most helpful to park wardens, Herrero's studies have specifically mapped out where the bears are most likely to be in Banff during the different seasons. They go into dormancy about November, the biologist says, in dens that are invariably found about 7,200 feet up on north- and east-facing slopes. "You can expect to find grizzlies there from November through April. And they're not always in their dens; they sit around outside for a couple of weeks." In spring, only the most intrepid wilderness hikers or photographers are likely to come upon a bear as it hunts carrion and roots, usually on remote snow-free slopes that face southwest. By late May, the bears are mating in very specific areas, usually only a few acres, on isolated ridges. During the summer tourist season, which runs into August, they're in their subalpine feeding areas. Their diet at this time includes succulent horsetail plants, mountain sorrel and some early-developing buffalo berries. Before winter dormancy, they fatten up on more buffalo berries, roots and perhaps an occasional elk.

Herrero is his own best example of how to live safely with bears: "We've put in something like 12,000 hours on

this project and we've had no serious confrontations — and no injury at all," he says. Oh, an angry grizzly just released from a live-trap has charged his truck and climbed on the hood, and two cubs have come up onto the porch of his cabin to eat a pair of tennis shoes. But no grizzly has tried to break in because Herrero insists on camping wisely. He and his colleagues almost never cook meat there and never throw out more than a few oatmeal flakes with their dishwater.

Over in Jasper Park, Dick Russell also reports no serious confrontations after five years of watching grizzlies. Working with two helpers, he captured grizzlies each spring, downing them with anesthetic darts fired from a gun. He then fitted them with radio-transmitter collars. Russell admits that some wardens feel trapping and tagging make a bear more aggressive, but he contends that "if you trap them, you're reinforcing what is already a natural fear. Whenever we bumped into a tagged bear, it invariably took off."

Thanks to his research, the movements of Jasper's grizzlies are as well-known as the wanderings of Banff's. Russell reports that the males come to Jasper in spring to feed on the fleshy roots of legumes. Later they scatter, some traveling 120 miles. These males usually roam the river valleys and the most accessible paths, which include horse trails and well-used game routes, generally within 1,000 vertical feet of the valley bottoms. Russell says the mature males are rarely dangerous to hikers because "they're king of the walk and don't feel threatened." These males tend to be hostile toward young bears, so females with cubs try to avoid them by frequenting rougher terrain and higher elevations. So during summer, hikers on high scenic trails run more risk of encountering a female and cub than they would in the lowlands.

The biologist hopes wardens will consider this telling fact in designing new trails and rerouting old ones. He points to the 120-mile-long South Boundary Trail as a model: it avoids high and rugged areas where females with cubs would most likely be encountered during the tourist season. Instead, it runs along the lowest passes and through valley bottoms.

Less than five percent of all people-grizzly encounters result in an attack, Herrero believes. Indeed, many people

who have, in effect, "encountered" a grizzly were unaware of it because they didn't even see the animal. Although there's no foolproof way to avoid an attack, here are some prudent ways to behave in grizzly country, according to Herrero:

1. Make noise. Keep up a running chatter, yell or wear a bell.
2. If you do encounter a grizzly, don't try to outrace it; the animal can run 30 miles per hour.
3. Don't count on climbing a tree. Grizzlies are poor climbers, but they have been known to use convenient branches as ladders.
4. Play dead only as a last resort after actually being attacked.

The best defense of all, Herrero says, is to learn something about grizzlies beforehand. For example, people planning to travel in grizzly country should talk to park officials first, then bone up on the animal's habits. Herrero praises Glacier's booklet for visitors, *About Bears*. Among other things, it warns women not to wear cosmetics and deodorant, and to avoid hiking during their menstrual periods. Herrero would like to see the grizzly monitoring systems being used in Yellowstone and Glacier adapted to other parks. In Glacier, the park headquarters uses a computer terminal to furnish rangers with daily information about grizzly sightings, including the age, sex and behavior of the bears. Armed with this, rangers can divert people away from potential trouble.

Biologists can only lobby against the most obvious problem in grizzly management: garbage. Canada is lagging badly behind the U.S. in hauling away the garbage or "bearproofing" sanitary landfills with high, electrified cyclone fences having barbed-wire tops and concrete footings. Up until last year, sanitary landfills near Banff and garbage containers near Lake Louise within Banff remained open and, in 1979, more than 20 bears were trapped and six were shot as a result. Beginning this year, however, annual accumulations of 6,000 tons of garbage will be hauled 80 miles to the city of Calgary. But at Jasper, the landfill remains. It has no incinerator, and as many as 17 grizzlies have been seen there in one night. Dick Russell has urged park officials to act: "Unless we solve the garbage problems, we're going to have grizzly people problems."

Russell and his colleague doubt that people can ever be completely protected from grizzlies. Herrero tells a story that illustrates just how volatile a bear can be when its personal space is violated. During the filming of a National Film Board of Canada production, *Bears and Man*, a photographer accompanied Wilfred Etherington, a biologist with the Canadian Wildlife Service, as he moved a large, garbage-addicted male grizzly by helicopter deep into the Banff wilderness. Once the drugged bear was on the ground, the photographer kept filming it at close quarters for several hours. The animal was groggy, the 51-year-old Etherington was experienced — yet the

## Wise outdoorsmen try to discourage unwelcome visitors

Meat can be your "last meal" in grizzly country, so some backwoodsmen don't use it. The bear shown here, lured by the hours-old smell of hot Spam, is checking a cabin on Kodiak Island.

confused and angry bear grew alert enough to charge the two men. They ran, but the bear caught Etherington. The photographer threw rocks. The helicopter pilot "divebombed" from above. It lasted only a few long minutes. The grizzly killed the biologist.

Yet Herrero, who has studied the gory details of virtually every grizzly attack on the continent, and Dick Russell, who vividly remembers the time he himself was charged by a bear in Mount McKinley Park, both argue that to eliminate the grizzly would destroy the essential character of wilderness parks. They say that a park visitor's chances of getting mauled by a grizzly are still infinitely less than the odds of his being mangled in a car accident while en route to the park. □

Paul Grescoe is part-owner of Vancouver, Calgary and Edmonton city magazines. He also writes about British Columbia and the prairie provinces as western editor of Canada's weekly Today Magazine.



Perry Shankle

POLICY STATEMENT ON NATIONAL PARKS

Submitted by The Calgary Chamber of Commerce

(To replace existing Statement No. 54 on Page 41  
of the 1968-69 Policy Booklet of the Alberta  
Chamber of Commerce.)

1. The general purpose of the National Parks of Canada is now founded on the premise that the National Parks be public possessions as cited in the National Parks Act, 1930, which reads as follows:

"The Parks are hereby dedicated to the people of Canada for their benefit, education and enjoyment, subject to the provisions of this Act and the regulations, and such Parks shall be maintained and made use of so as to leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations".

(Chapter 33, Section 4)

2. However, the original intent for the establishment of Parks was not related to the unimpairment principle of the foregoing but rather to the development of health spas and other recreational areas. Thus, in certain National Parks the recreational purpose has become so firmly entrenched as to derogate completely and almost irrevocably from the wilderness maintenance philosophy of the present Statute. Experience in such Parks has shown that the demands of conservationists, recreationalists, and persons engaged in research are not compatible within the same geographical areas and therefore multiple use leads to confusion in interpretation of policy.
3. Experience has also shown that the word "Park" is capable of several different and conflicting connotations. In order to face the challenge of the varying interpretations placed on this word, a new and descriptive nomenclature must now emerge. By doing so, the policy for those areas now known as "National Parks" may properly take into account the varying needs and interests of foreign visitors, the Canadian people and the full potential of these dedicated areas.
4. It also seems clear that the Canadian policy for its dedicated lands will be considerably enhanced by the addition of further suitable areas into its National system in which a phase or phases of biological, zoological or anthropological ecology may be preserved from extinction or from such modification as to cause such affected ecologies to fade into insignificance in our National heritage.

National Parks cont'd.

5. Recommendations

to the Federal Government that:

- (a) To avoid confusion the major part of the existing national parks which are presently in a wilderness state be established as National Wilderness Parks and preserved as wilderness without development of any kind taking place therein.
- (b) The boundaries of the National Wilderness Parks be established by legislation and that the permitted uses in these parks be limited to those activities appropriate to the enjoyment of the wilderness, such as walking, horseback riding, canoeing, cross country skiing, climbing, hiking and other similar activities which would not detract from the natural state of these parks.
- (c) Additional National Wilderness Parks be established as soon as possible, the boundaries to be fixed by legislation, while wilderness areas are still available.
- (d) Suitable administrative facilities and areas necessary for the provision of services in the National Wilderness Parks be established outside the area of such Parks or if established within such Parks, the limits thereof be established by legislation.
- (e) No commercial, industrial, extractive, developmental or other similar use, i.e., mining, lumbering, pipelines, be permitted in National Wilderness Parks, it being the unanimous view of the committee that the National Wilderness Park is an extremely important and vital resource which must be retained for future generations of Canadians to enjoy.
- (f) Areas in the existing National Parks which can no longer be considered wilderness and are presently and properly used or should be used for recreational purposes be removed from the National Wilderness Parks and established as recreational areas to be administered either as National Recreation Areas under Federal jurisdiction, or as

National Parks cont'd.

Provincial Recreation Areas under Provincial jurisdiction, or under a combination of Federal and Provincial control, subject to conditions limiting their use to recreation and outdoor activities with adequate consideration for aesthetic and ecological requirements of the area; provided, however, that if National Recreation Areas be deemed advisable, they be administered by a department of the Federal Government other than that which is responsible for the administration of National Wilderness Parks.

- (g) The uses permitted in National Recreation Areas be those activities which are normally found in tourist recreation areas in North America but that such activities be carried out in a manner consistent with aesthetic and good planning considerations.
- (h) No commercial, industrial, extractive, developmental or other similar use, i.e., mining, lumbering, pipelines, be permitted in such recreation areas, as such recreation areas are an extremely important and vital resource which must be retained for future generations of Canadians to enjoy.
- (i) National Wildlife Areas, National Nature Preserves, National Seashores, National Wild Rivers and National Historic Sites be established pursuant to suitable legislation, as these areas deserve protection from an ecological, aesthetic and historical point of view and will immediately benefit Canada as well as ensure the maintenance of the magnificent natural landscape of Canada for the benefit of future generations.
- (j) Consideration be given to the establishment of an independent commission or Crown corporation to administer and control National Wilderness Parks, National Wildlife Areas, National Nature Preserves, National Seashores, National Wild Rivers, and National Historic Sites, as it would draw together all the expert and trained people in this field and would allow for a more direct and immediate approach to the selection of and acquisition of the land necessary for these areas.
- (k) The National Parks Act be re-written as soon as possible under a suitable title to carry out the changes suggested herein and that a Canadian Wildlife Act be enacted to cover those matters relating to this field not easily covered in the National Parks Act, such as migratory birds, etc.

National Parks cont'd.

- (l) Because of the pressing importance of determining the requirements for outdoor recreational facilities in Canada a study be undertaken as soon as possible by a suitable Department of the Government.
- (m) It reopen negotiations with the various Provincial Governments in order to implement the foregoing recommendations.
- (n) Within the Province of Alberta, such recreation areas be established within the Bow River Corridor and the Yellowhead Corridor by removing from the present National Parks in accordance with the foregoing recommendations the developed areas and adjacent areas which are now more suitable for recreation areas than for the maintenance of wilderness.

April 11, 1969.

# Do Predators Eradicate Disease?

by ALLAN BROOKS

(Illustrations by the author)

they are heaven-sent crusaders for the inculcation of this gospel. Only they can thrill properly.

But anyone who has spent a lifetime close to nature and has witnessed the actual workings of predation must ask himself the question, is the thrill worth the price the victims of the predators have to pay? Much has been written about the cruelties of sport, but these pale to insignificance beside the agonies of the pig that is slowly eaten alive by the marauding bear, (I have heard the screams!) or the tortures endured by a weakened deer being slowly done to death by a pair of coyotes. That is the time to appraise the predator-lover's thrill!

But apart from all sentiment, will the claim so often made that predators prevent the spread of disease by eliminating the sick individuals

sense tell us that predators must prefer well-conditioned and healthy prey? They naturally avoid diseased food just as humans do.

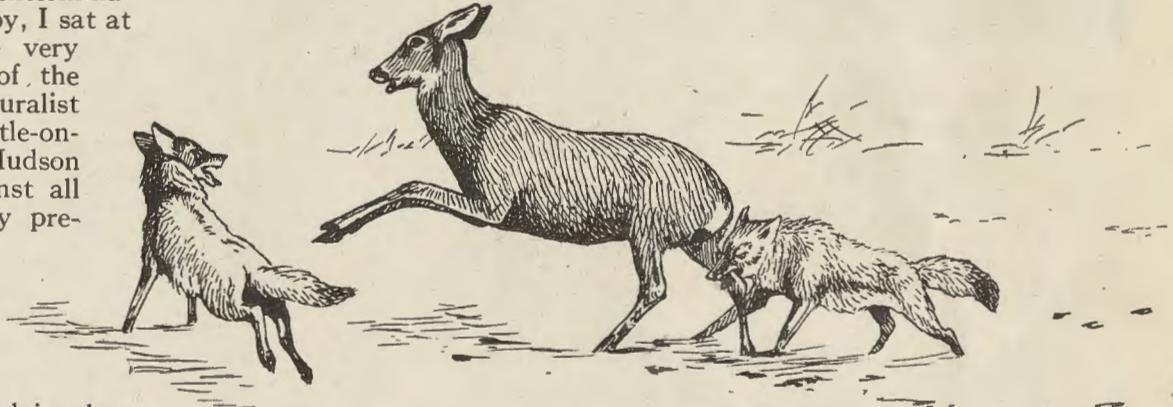
A fine field for the study of this problem is afforded on Vancouver Island. It has a large population of deer together with what is probably the greatest percentage of predators, cougars, and wolves, found in any part of the continent. Disease, chiefly various types of internal parasites, is prevalent in the deer. In the southern portion of the island where most of the settlement exists, deer are permanently numerous with slight fluctuations in numbers while predators are moderately scarce. In the northern and mainly unsettled portion, deer range from a great abundance to almost total extermination in periodic cycles, and predators are numerous with disease rampant.

## DVOCATES

of the control  
directed against them nowadays;  
they are supposed to lack that fine  
aesthetic feeling for nature that  
characterizes the mass of people  
to whom the name of "Zoophile"  
has been applied.

The man (or woman) who advocates the control of injurious mammals or birds is supposed to be actuated solely by a hatred of all creatures that are classed as predators. Actually, many, if not most of us, have a very keen appreciation of these animals and birds, and would view their utter extermination with regret. As a boy, I sat at the feet of one of the very first of the champions of the predator, that fine naturalist John Hancock of Newcastle-on-Tyne. Long before Hudson started the crusade against all those who would destroy predators in order to increase the supply of game, Hancock, in the latter part of the nineteenth century used to preach the creed of the balance of nature and claimed a beneficent action for birds and mammals that preyed on others. So that when I first arrived on this continent in 1881, I was a firm believer in his theory. But how soon I learned its fallacy, as a long life spent continuously in contact with nature laid bare its secrets! Who has not thrilled to the howl of the wolf, the thunderbolt rush of a falcon or even the mere sight of the big round track of a cougar in the snow each and every time they were fortunate enough to be witnesses of such incidents? Even the aboriginal is inspired with admiration of the predator and has been through all the ages.

But the Zoophiles consider themselves and only themselves to be inspired with an entirely new conception of the wonders of nature, and how many of them believe that



Allan Brooks

stand a practical test? This is a plausible theory and one that is generally accepted; but how little truth there is in it! Predators and especially bird predators hunt by the movement of their prey; a sick bird or mammal does not move much, the natural instinct is to remain perfectly still, usually in hiding or under cover; sick birds do not even feed. It is the healthy individuals full of movement and active in search of food that are the victims; it is obvious that sick birds may recover to spread their infection, while the healthy active ones are destroyed.

Again does not ordinary common

The commonest disease is that of the liver, caused by a parasite and locally known as "swamp liver". The combination of this disease plus predation results in the periodic near-extinction of the deer population.

Do the predators seek out the weakened deer and stamp out the disease? Just the opposite; while a cougar may kill a diseased deer, it will not eat any of it and goes hungry until it can kill a healthy animal. Cougars soon learn to avoid the lowlands where the disease is prevalent and choose as their hunting grounds the uplands where deer

(Continued on page 29)

## Do Predators Eradicate Disease?

(Continued from page 13)

are healthy; this soon results in the destruction of the latter while disease decimates the stricken animals of the lowlands.

Even wolves avoid the diseased animals, and it is doubtful if bears eat them.

When disease and predators have reduced the deer to the vanishing point, cougars and wolves turn their attention to smaller animals; beaver and coons suffer, and the starving cougars invade the settlers' homesteads destroying livestock including domestic cats, dogs and even poultry, also the young of their own kind until finally they themselves are reduced to the vanishing point, allowing the deer to slowly regain their abundance. So the cycles go on.

Can this by any stretch of the imagination be called a balance? Could not a judicious management by man improve on this wasteful method of nature?

The champions of our predators universally preach and accept two theories: (1) That predators, if uncontrolled, will bring about an abundance of game birds by their beneficial action in destroying the sick. They also insist that (2) uncontrolled predation will prevent rodent plagues and keep the rodent population to a minimum.

Now how can any thinking man reconcile these two absolutely opposing theories?

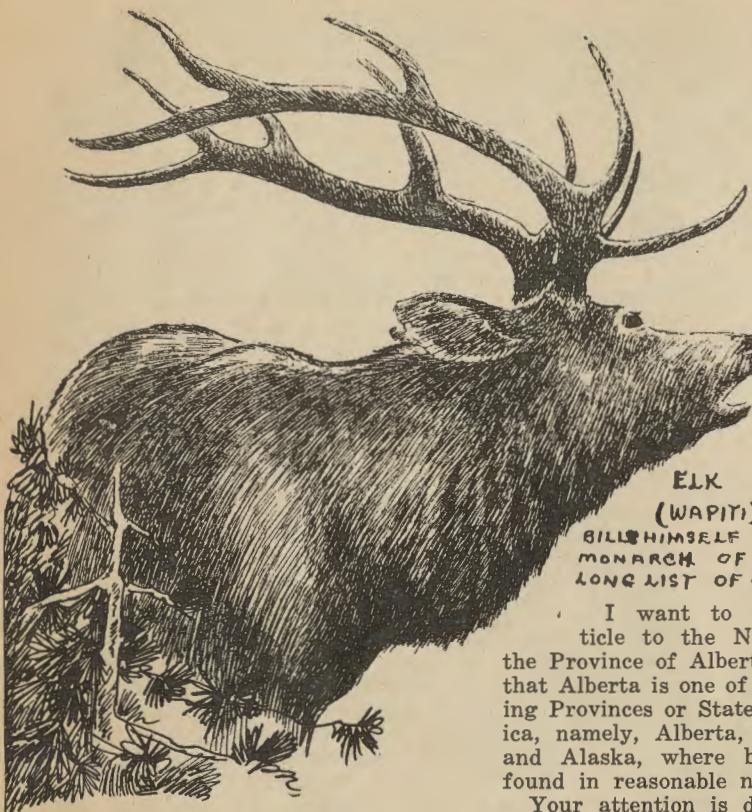
Actually, rodent plagues are as old as creation and reached a far greater density in the far distant past when predators were numerous and uncontrolled than they ever do now. The fact is that overabundance of any form of life tends to induce disease and so brings about a rapid decrease, reducing the population to the lowest level.

It may be there are doubters in regard to the conditions I have outlined on Vancouver Island. If so I shall be happy to provide the evidence of men of wide experience and undoubted veracity.

At the same time I would like to hear of any factual evidence that predators have eradicated disease either among big game or game birds. I can supply much more than the above to prove the contrary.



# Sabotage in



ELK

(WAPITI)

BILLS HIMSELF A LARGE  
MONARCH OF CANADA'S  
LONG LIST OF GAME.

I want to restrict this article to the National Parks in the Province of Alberta, for the reason that Alberta is one of the three remaining Provinces or States in North America, namely, Alberta, British Columbia and Alaska, where big game can be found in reasonable numbers.

Your attention is drawn to the fact that in the 26 National Parks situated within the confines of the United States of America the acreage is limited to some eight million acres of land, whereas in the Province of Alberta, we have the following Parks:

Waterton Lakes .....	140,800 acres
Banff .....	1,654,400 "
Jasper .....	2,688,000 "
Nemiskam .....	5,440 "
Buffalo ....	126,000 "
Elk Island ..	32,768 "
Wood Buffalo Park ....	8,752,000 "
Total .....	13,399,808 "

Banff and Jasper alone cover 7,000 square miles of country, and take up in the Province the heart of our big game country.

The boundaries of these parks have been fixed without regard to game, the migration of game or the suitability of certain areas within the said parks for the purposes of park or parks.

The Act respecting National Parks is Chapter 33, of an Act respecting National Parks, 20-21 George V. Paragraph 4 thereof cites as follows:

*"The Parks are hereby dedicated to the people of Canada for their benefit, education and enjoyment, subject to the provisions of this Act and Regulations, and such parks shall be maintained and made use of so as to leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations."*

The officials of the Parks Department interpret this as meaning that they shall raise sufficient predators in the Parks to keep down or kill off the increase in the game, thereby wasting animal life, notwithstanding the fact that we have a scarcity of animal life in the country and there is not sufficient

big game for the hunters that are here now and those who could be brought into the country. This is not conservation, but is absolute waste, and is benefitting very few people, not the people of Canada in general.

The policy of the Parks Department as outlined in a letter to me from Mr. R. A. Gibson, Director of the Department of Mines and Resources, Lands, Parks and Forests Branch, is as follows:

*"The National Parks of Canada are set aside as wildlife sanctuaries where native wild animals, along with vegetation and the geological formations which contribute to what we call scenery, are to be preserved as far as possible in their natural state, with the influence of man kept out of the picture in every way possible".*

This letter is dated September 24, 1940. This policy has made the continued existence of our Rocky Mountain Sheep, Goat and Deer problematical.

The officials of the Parks Department constantly refer to the National Parks of the United States of America, and the Kruger National Park of South Africa, as the basis of their policy. They quote with approval J. Stevenson-Hamilton, Warden of the Kruger National Park, and the man responsible for looking after the Sabi Game Reserve from 1902 until it was turned into a National Park.

I maintain that you cannot operate a National Park in Alberta on the same policy as one in the United States of America or Africa because the conditions and the whole set-up are entirely different.

The National Parks of the United States of America are, and I quote J.

The opinions expressed in this article are strictly the author's own, and HUNTING and FISHING in CANADA does not necessarily agree with them. The publication of this article is in line with our policy—that this magazine is an open forum for all interested in wildlife.



MULE DEER—  
LARGEST OF NORTH  
AMERICAN DEER - RANGE  
COVERS WESTERN  
SECTIONS.



BIG HORN SHEEP—  
(ROCKY MOUNTAIN  
SHEEP) - WITH  
HIS CLOSE RELATIVES,  
DALL WHITE AND  
FANNIN'S SHEEP.  
TAKE THOSE WHO  
HUNT THEM TO  
HIGH LEDGES OF  
THE ROCKIES.

# the National Parks

Stevenson-Hamilton, "play-grounds for the people, whereas Kruger National Park may be more fitly designated as 'A Sanctuary for the Fauna, to which the Public is admitted'."

In the Kruger National Park, if any hunting was done in the park, it would frighten the lions and, quoting J. Stevenson-Hamilton, "whatever else may or may not be the case, it is quite certain that any serious attempt at present to reduce the number of lions in the park would spell the end of its popularity with the public". In Africa, they have so many animals that they hunt the year around, and the animals there migrate from place to place extensively, whereas, in our country, we haven't nearly as many animals and generally speaking these do not migrate extensively.

Sportsmen, to the park officials, are predators of the worst kind and frequently described as "Arch Slaughterers", "The Enemies of Wild Life", and "Persons who want to shoot game both outside and inside the parks", and many other uncomplimentary designations. The fact is, sportsmen are the only true friends of wildlife, as regulated hunting is one of the most important instruments in game management in both building up a herd or flock, and in holding it in check when it reaches the maximum number that the range will support.

The Parks officials are enamoured with the phrase "The Balance of Nature". Animals were placed on the earth for the benefit of man. It is quite clear that in hunting areas, game cannot stand hunters and predators combined, nevertheless I feel it incumbent to state that it is a disgrace to find that the policy of the officials of the Na-

by W. C. Fisher

Chairman, Big Game Section, Alberta Fish & Game Ass'n.

tional Park branch at Ottawa indicates nothing better than to raise game to feed predators. National Parks it is true, were made for the people, yes, all the people, not merely a few camera hunters and a few tourists, but sportsmen also have the right to benefit from the game as well as anybody else. However, the matter is more serious than that.

There are only some 12,000 Rocky Mountain Sheep in the United States of America. Already eight States in the Union have no big game at all. Disease from domestic animals has spread among the game herds in the United States and in fact, right up into Waterton Lakes Park, and it is making rapid progress in our own forest reserve. This winter eighty sheep in the Kootenay National Park, British Columbia, have been found dead.

The finest Rocky Mountain Sheep country in America, I believe, is the Brazeau country. There is a wonderful stretch of country from Maligne Lake straight east, roughly thirty miles by sixty miles. This would make an excellent game reserve for Rocky Mountain Sheep, and would insure for all time a supply of these wonderful animals. Practically all the high mountains on which there are goat, are in the parks.

Now let us look at the result. The Balance of Nature theory as advocate by the officials of our National Parks works this way in Africa. The animals increase and the predators increase. Ordinarily, a female lion will give birth to two or three cubs, but as soon as the game is plentiful they give birth to as many as four or five in a litter, and other predators increase similarly. Presently, as the game begins to disappear from the superabundance of predators, it is noticed that the younger lions are often in poor condition, cubs dying and the number of lions of all ages, especially of the young animals, slain by their companions, is greatly increased. A ranger in Kruger Park once found no less than five young lions slain by their companions round the remains of a kill, and another time seven

**ROCKY MOUNTAIN GOAT—  
THIS MOUNTAINEER PICKS  
HIS WAY ALONG HOG'S-BACKS  
AND INACCESSIBLE LEDGES  
ABOVE TIMBER LINES OF THE  
ROCKIES**

cubs of about two months were noticed thin and hungry lying abandoned under the same tree.

The "leave it to nature" policy of the Department has worked out in Alberta in the following manner. In Banff and Jasper Parks, at their inception, there was very little game, and few predators. As game became plentiful because of game reserves, parks and game laws, the cougars came in from British Columbia where they are very plentiful. Authorities in that Province killed, between

1922 and 1940, 7,293 cougars and 70,783 coyotes.

We have killed the following cou-  
(continued on  
page 31)



ANTELOPE  
(PRONGHORN)  
WHO IS FOUND ONLY IN  
NORTH AMERICA

## WILDERNESS, WILDLIFE AND NATIONAL PARKS

Wilderness and the idea of wilderness is one  
of the permanent homes of the human spirit.

J.W. Krutch

To everything there is a season - nowhere are these words more beautifully born out than in the life cycles of the wild creatures that inhabit our National Parks. Wildlife is the reflection of wilderness, and, within the National Park boundaries, myriad life forms harmonize in a delicate web of existence.

Hugging the province's west boundary, Banff and Jasper National Parks are Alberta's claim to fame in this respect. Victoria Day ignites the restless flame to seek wild places and from then through to Labour Day thousands of tourists head for the mountains. A combined total of nearly 6 million people visited the Parks, a total area of 6,764 square miles, in the fiscal year 1970/71.

The concept of national parks began in Canada as far back as 1885 when, on 25 November, an area of 10 square miles around the mineral hot springs at Banff Station, Alberta, was set aside for public sanitary purposes. In 1887 Banff Hot Springs Reserve was enlarged to 260 square miles and officially became Canada's first National Park. 20 years later Jasper National Park was inaugurated into the system. Even in those early days the First Commissioner of the National Parks of Canada, J.B. Harkin, recognised the greatest of conservation principles - the protection by a nation of its natural beauty and wonder for future generations.

Man's progression socially, industrially and scientifically has detracted him from his natural environment and pushed him into the confines of a mechanized orderly technological commune. In one hundred years he has advanced from Red River Carts to Saturn V Rockets and from steam engines to supersonic aircraft. Wilderness, the cradle of all we call human, has suffered every step of the way.

Canadian ~~XXXX~~ economy has been dependent on four principal pillars in the past hundred years - industrial development in the east, settlement of the west, mineral exploitation in the north and the interruption of two world wars. Scholastic achievement, employment competition, the constant physical and mental demands of technological living and condensed urban sprawl all combine to whip us into a hurricane of activity, the eye of which affords a tranquility only reflected in wilderness experience - the epitome of all natural sensitivities. To the pressurized city dweller, National Parks provide that outlet.

The concept of wilderness experience and its desirability as a recreational past-time probably began with tales of excitement, adventure and daring brought back to the condensed civilized areas in eastern Canada and Europe by the explorers , fur trappers and traders of the 18th and 19th centuries. The craving for wilderness activity today is but an echo of an already established orderly way of life during a long ago time. Those tales of the pioneers re-ignited the oldest flame known to man - the alliance of man and nature.

To appreciate wilderness experience, an understanding of the ecology of the region and a realization that we must occasionally shed our predatory cloak and become a part of an ecosystem in which we are less dominant is of prime importance.

The study of ecology is a relatively new science within the confines of a University lecture room yet it is the oldest of nature's industries. When National Parks were established, these areas were "dedicated to the people....for their benefit, education and enjoyment" and should remain "unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations" (National Parks Act 1930). The science of ecology has led to an expansion of education in which the Parks ~~have~~ have become nature's campuses boasting exemplary science laboratories, study centres and observational areas.

One of the most exhilarating and satisfying ways of experiencing wilderness is a trail ride round the mountains. This summer I spent a week as trail guide for an outfit known as the Pony Barns operating out of the Patricia/Pyramid Lake area just north of the town of Jasper.

Trails led up mountain sides overlooking energetic watersheds, forests of pine, spruce and aspen and bolder strewn canyons. Riders could watch elk graze by the shores of an emerald lake; follow game trails made by deer passing to a favourite watering spot; watch a woodpecker cling perpendicular to a spruce tree or see a slashed tree trunk rotting on a tinder dry alpine meadow where a bear had searched for wood ants. Red squirrels chattered incessantly, indignant at being interrupted during their annual pine cone harvest, nutcrackers cawed throatily from the tops of Douglas firs and huge black ravens gathered like supercilious undertakers on rocky overhangs. Trail riders found an enchantment far beyond their imaginations - a wilderness way of life they thought only existed in a Wat Disney movie.

As a service to visitors, interpretive nature programmes ~~were~~ held by Park Naturalists and their staff throughout the summer. Talks, lectures and films ~~were~~ held in campground ~~amphitheatre~~ amphitheatres during the evenings while informative hikes ~~were~~ conducted during the day. These programmes are becoming increasingly popular and illustrate a growing concern to understand the ecology of these mountain regions.

The rapid increase in the number of visitors to National Parks in the past 20 years though has begun to threaten the profile of wilderness itself ~~is~~ through the demand for more picnic areas, campsites and visitor facilities, and the use of skidoos, helicopters and ski runs. Wilderness recreation is experiencing a fast upsurge in popularity - hiking, canoeing, mountaineering and so on - all facets of the 'return to nature' hypothesis. Ironically, this penetration is at the expense of wilderness itself and its dependent flora and fauna. Manmade trails, carelessly discarded garbage and fires illustrate a degree of penetration that is detrimental to wilderness ecology.

The demands by increased visitor activity on wilderness penetration may have to result in more stringent controls ~~is~~ on the numbers entering wild places. Staggered penetration, advance booking and fees may have to be applied in the future, a policy already in practice in New Zealand and Poland. Access to land designated for wildlife preservation may only be allowed in groups with an official guide and areas suffering from penetration may be closed to the public altogether until the land has recuperated.

The fingers of industry have penetrated far into wilderness areas and have caused insufferable losses of wildlife throughout the world - 100 animal species have become extinct since 1900 and 1,000 more are listed as being threatened likewise in less than 30 years from now. That's one species every 11 days from now to the turn of the ~~is~~ century. Of these, 68 are Canadian endangered species.

Here the role of the National Parks has its greatest impact. Every animal, every plant, every tree is protected - nothing must be disturbed save a footprint in the dust.

Elk, mule and white tail deer, moose, Rocky Mountain sheep and goat, grizzly and black bear, mountain lion and a whole host of birds dwell protected in their delicate ecological niches within Park boundaries. Each plays a vital role that ensures the survival of another.

But conservation of just wildlife is not enough - correct and sensitive handling of the wilderness environment is the only passport to maintaining a healthy balance of prey-predator in numbers that ensure the species' survival and the aesthetic enjoyment of the public. An example of the problems of such delicate management of wilderness environment is shown in the policy adopted toward forest fires.

Parks are people orientated and forest fires are dangerous hazards vehemently fought by Government agencies. During the peak visiting period of July and August every summer the greatest number of fires occur and throughout 1971 135 fires occurred in the 11 National Parks of the Western Region burning 477,653 acres at a cost of \$2.9 million. However, despite their threat, fires are vital to the continuous well being of wildlife for they clear the thick jungle rubbish of mature forest areas and promote the growth of nutritious grasses that become fresh winter ranges for elk, deer, sheep and moose. The prevention of the forest to grassland recession results in a reduction of herbivorous feeding ~~ranges~~ ranges.

Proliferation of herbivores and the lack of predatory control from wolves, grizzlies and mountain lions through persecution in the past has encouraged an overpopulation in the number of grass eaters and a subsequent threat of starvation from diminishing overgrazed rangelands. At present, culling and transplantation are the adopted practices to trim herd numbers.

It has been previously considered that park boundaries lie adjacent to wintering ranges on crown land where hunting can keep big game numbers relative to range capacity. However, coal excavation activities are creeping in on these areas and strip mining is threatening to eliminate these nutritious ranges. Wildlife cannot wait for the land reclamation programme to be completed and their salvation may have to lie within the National Parks.

The problem though can be solved. In the case of forest ~~fix~~ fires, a format of controlled burning is seriously being considered. The Bow and Athabasca valleys have been experiencing forest advancement at the expense of prime grazing ranges and controlled cutback would relieve some of the pressure on ~~wild~~~~fix~~ wildlife. In the case of predation, an encouraged breeding programme and the elimination of the mountain lion and grizzly from the hunter's bag would be of paramount importance from the ecologic, aesthetic, economic and scientific points of view.

Litters of ~~wixwix~~ wolf cubs and cougar kittens are multiple and grizzly sows generally give birth to 2 or 3 cubs after their first pregnancies. Large park areas provide ideal conditions to ensure the protection of these far ranging animals and allow the studies for their conservation. For many years these wild predators have been burdened with ~~mixx~~ mis-leading and ill-fated reputations - a reversal of the public's attitude toward them would be the first step in ensuring their survival.

Within National Park boundaries, wildlife offers the people the benefits and enjoyment stipulated in the National Parks Act of aesthetic satisfaction through wilderness experience unequalled by any manmade stimuli. Watching wild creatures they can teach us the qualities of patience, understanding, appreciation and awareness - a rare course of study within the confines of the concrete jungle of urban living.

# WING BEATS



## CALGARY BIRD CLUB

### What good is it?

This is a question that one is confronted with quite often when natural history or the outdoors is being discussed.

A great many people, many of them sophisticated or worldly-wise, seem to adhere to the idea that if an object cannot be eaten, skinned or manipulated in some form or other for personal gain, then it has no right to exist.

While it is believed that we are making some progress in educating our citizens in the necessity of preserving all wildlife, we have yet a long way to go.

One September I visited an area of extensive sloughs during a Sunday after it had quieted down from visiting duck hunters.

Now, I have no quarrel with those who hunt ducks or any other game if it is done in a sensible manner and in conjunction with existing game laws.

Hunting is a privilege to be enjoyed by all who wish to engage

in the sport and in some cases it becomes a necessity when game becomes over-abundant. However, as I looked over this large acreage of sloughs and walked around the edges of some, I was rightfully disgusted by finding the dead and rotting bodies of several species of non-game birds killed by thoughtless and ignorant so-called sportsmen.

I found gulls, grebes, avocets, godwits, and other non-game birds strewn around the slough edges.

Of real concern today to conservationists is the wanton destruction of non-game species.

Although many naturalists condemn all hunting, it is clear that a great many outstanding and influential conservationists have been avid hunters.

As Aldo Leopold wrote, "that we who love geese also love to hunt them is a paradox which puzzles logicians."

Hunting as practised on a wide scale is to be condoned if the shooter is governed by self-restraint and does not indulge in a careless waste of birdlife, but all shooting is not of this type and for that reason laws and enforcement officers are necessary not only to cope with the problems arising from the intense competition for the supply of wild game, but also to protect species not labelled as game.

These laws are not uniformly enforced or enforceable. In some provinces, hawks, owls and fish-eating birds are shot with complete disregard of the law. Fox and coyote drives result in the mass extermination of anything that moves. Pest control campaigns and bounty payments continue contrary to biological justification. These problems are only part of a bigger one — a disregard for the value of wildlife not considered game.

This disregard is exemplified by the hunter who shoots all hawks and owls in the belief that he is protecting game. Selfish in his desire to increase meat for his game bag, he is willing to barter the existence of one species for the anticipated increase of another, quite ignorant of the essential role played by all. The lack of facts characteristic of this type of hunter is often the result of propaganda by hunting and fishing magazines. These magazines replete with "true" stories, and colorful advertisements by arms and ammunition manufacturers, clamor for the destruction of various non-game species—crows, magpies, hawks, owls, plus mammals of many kinds. Thus, species which many of us like to see and watch and claim as a rightful part of our heritage are labelled as vermin. It must be obvious that the individuals responsible for such hunting practices haven't the remotest idea of the value of these non-game birds and animals in the wildlife community. They are no good to eat, so what good are they? (E.D.B.)



## Save the grizzlies! Time is running out

By  
**Andy Russell**



Andy Russell of Alberta, naturalist, writer and photographer, is an authority on grizzly bears.

A proposal this week by the B.C. fish and wildlife branch to impose further restrictions on grizzly bear hunting in the province has elicited a reaction from big game guides, who fear that without the grizzlies as an attraction there will be fewer hunters.

But without protection such as this, says Russell, eventually there will be no grizzlies left.

On Aug. 19, 1691, the intrepid explorer Henry Kelsey reports in his journal that he saw and killed two grizzlies not far from the southern end of Lake Winnipeg in what was later to become Manitoba.

These were likely the first grizzlies shot by a white man in North America and the first record of sighting a plains grizzly, then numerous in the western portions of the continent.

On a trading expedition in 1871-72 for the Hudson's Bay Company, Isaac Cowie leaves written record of taking 750 grizzly skins and 1,500 elk skins in trade at a post just east of the Cypress Hills in what is now southwestern Saskatchewan.

This gives some indication of the numbers of grizzlies then roaming the Prairies and what the hide-hunters were doing shortly after the buffalo had all but disappeared.

By 1882 there were very few grizzlies left on the plains; the last recorded kill being in Manitoba in 1890. Only the coastal, mountain, and tundra grizzlies were left, and in Canada these ranged through British Columbia, Alberta, the Yukon Territory and the Northwest Territories. Over the intervening years these have been hunted, trapped and even poisoned.

The grizzlies have had very little protection until fairly recent times, and even yet this protection suffers from thin spots in what should be a warm, understanding coat of conservation.

Until comparatively recent times, Alberta offered the grizzly almost no protection. Indeed, in places along the Rockies being used as cattle range, grizzlies were listed as a predator and bounties were paid on their scalps. Because the big bear loves carrion, any domestic animal dying on its range is normally cleaned up, with the consequence that it has been credited with many more kills than it has actually made.

True, some individuals do learn to kill large animals, but most grizzlies never kill anything larger than a marmot. Being 85 per cent vegetarian and omnivorous rather than predacious, their use of meat for food is minimal under anything like normal conditions.

In one case involving a cattle-killing grizzly in the vicinity of Pincher Creek, Alberta, a predator hunter came in to collect bounty and took 32 bears in one season, none of which was the actual killer. Perhaps this canny gentleman realized that killing this bear would be like putting an end to the goose that laid the golden egg—so he carefully preserved it.

Countless times, grizzlies feeding on animals that had died of eating poison plants, disease and other causes were killed with no questions asked. But the cattle industry's conflict with the big bear has been mild compared with what happened in the advent of wilderness habitat destruction by petroleum, timber, mineral and tourist developments.

Following the Second World War, when the petroleum developments boomed, all hell broke loose in grizzly country. Apart from habitat destruction vital to the big bears by incompatible and sometimes carelessly destructive land-use activities, there was hardly a

camp without its complement of rifles kept for "protective purposes" and off-day recreation was often hunting. Even though this was illegal, provincial authorities for the most part turned a blind eye toward it.

One company is known to have purchased rifles from a factory distributor for such purposes.

When an oil exploration executive wrote a magazine article extolling the virtues of a popular four-wheel-drive vehicle for wild country exploration and the hunting that went with it, the fertilizer hit the fan, as the saying goes.

Resulting angry reaction by concerned people brought about some decent regulation, but not until a great deal of damage had been done.

But not all the blame rests with the petroleum industry, for variations of the same kind of negligence and lack of responsibility occurred in lumber and construction camps as well as the activities of mineral prospectors.

For years the common practice in various kinds of camps was to dispose of wet garbage by dumping it down the nearest gully or in an open pit. The lure of this new source of food attracted bears into the vicinity and inevitably, bear-human conflict ended up in the destruction of the bears.

One enterprising soul familiar with the use of dynamite sought to make a wholesale slaughter by constructing bombs. He packed metal containers with

scrap iron, rocks and dynamite. For reasons best known to himself, he filled in the space between the chunks of iron and rocks with powdered lime. He then placed the bombs, rigged with electric detonators, in the dump where several bears and a flock of ravens were in the habit of feeding.

At an opportune moment a great explosion was set off, killing unknown numbers of the animals and birds. But some of the ravens certainly escaped and these had been transformed from their normal coal black into white by the lime driven into their feathers. Reports of albino ravens drew the attention of the wildlife authorities and the culprit was ultimately tracked down.

How many grizzlies died around various camps along the Alaska Highway when it was under construction and during other road-building activities that followed in Alberta and British Columbia, nobody will ever know, but it likely runs into hundreds.

How many grizzlies were shot on sight by wandering prospectors in the Canadian hinterlands cannot be guessed but evidence points to considerable numbers. How many more have been indirectly wiped out by the too often wasteful destruction of habitat, there is no way to tell. But certainly we are aware that much of what was ideal grizzly country as recently as 10 years ago, now has few of the big bears.

Fortunately the national parks offer a measure of refuge, although even here the pressure of people is something of a threat. In spite of the fact that the odds against being hurt by a grizzly in the five major Rocky Mountain parks in Western Canada are about two million to one, the publicity following such incidents is always out of proportion to the actual danger.

The risk of operating a vehicle on highways in the parks is infinitely greater yet news reporting fatal accidents on the roads is minimal simply because such incidents are so common.

If grizzlies were half as dangerous as popular belief tends to indicate, tourist use of the parks would be virtually impossible. For that matter, the early settlement of the West would likely have been held up for many years.

Prior to the coming of the white man and his guns, the grizzly was king of all life on the plains. The Indians killed very few, for their crude weapons put them at a distinct disadvantage.

Then as today, the grizzly did not go out of its way to look for trouble, although the big animal's curiosity or reaction to surprise can trigger close-range confrontations. Generally, the big bear is peacefully inclined.

Park authorities know this and are going to considerable lengths to improve their management — a program that includes public education. Consequently incidents of conflict are being reduced even in the face of steadily growing park use by visitors.

The grizzly can well be a kind of barometer registering the level of human appreciation for the beauty of the face of the land. We have made a gesture towards better management, but it is not nearly enough.

Generally speaking, fish and wildlife management is being stifled through lack of sufficient money — priorities too low in comparison with other resource development programming. In view of its values to tourism, recreation and long range needs of people, our treatment of the habitat necessary for good fish and wildlife management is short-sighted and wasteful.

Along with the grizzly, we need wilderness preservation, and so far both federal and provincial policy has been lukewarm in this direction. Even decent

protection through law enforcement is insufficient and not nearly enough field research is being done.

The Yukon Territory has only two full-time wildlife officers concerned with protection. The Northwest Territories still operates under the outdated assumption that people need to be protected from grizzlies.

Northern British Columbia has only one wildlife officer looking after a huge

stretch of country reaching from the Alberta boundary west to the Alaska Panhandle out of its office at Fort Nelson.

The Alberta fish and wildlife authority has no idea how many grizzlies are left in that province, nor are its priorities anywhere near sufficient to find out. The current plan to reopen a spring grizzly season south of the Bow River has no justification, for there are very few grizzlies in this region.

We have seen the grizzly wiped out over a huge portion of its former range through ignorance or weight of human numbers.

Whether or not this pattern of management continues to a point of no return depends on our recognition of important values where habitat preservation is concerned — a kind of habitat that is not only vital to the grizzly but also to us.